among the Onondagas yet. In both cases these may be due to a new environment. The flat soapstone vessels, with their many perforations, are earlier in New York than the Iroquois occupancy, and altogether apart from it. Many of them have handles, and they occur along the larger streams. The material is not found in the State, as far as I remember, and they seem to have been brought here by fishing parties. The common forms are like some Eskimo vessels.

The figure on page 136, representing a man's belt, is of special interest, as showing the reputed form and material of the primitive Iroquois council belt, afterwards made of wampum. The foundation of this Eskimo belt is like that of a wampum belt, but quills, or shafts of feathers, form the pattern instead of beads. Now, it is a clearly proved fact that the Iroquois and their predecessors in New York had no shell beads suitable for belts, and very few at all. Loskiel said that they used small colored sticks. In a paper on "Hiawatha," and in my "Iroquois Trail," I have given some Iroquois stories on their first use of wampum, in some of which the wampum bird figures. One of these represents Hiawatha stringing the quills of the legendary black eagle. The Mohawk chief, however, cannot call down the sacred bird, and sends a string of partridge quills in return. An Onondaga told me that their early belts were made of the quills of birds or of porcupines, which were afterwards replaced with beads. The latter have been found on no early sites, and are quite modern with them.

W. M. BEAUCHAMP.

Baldwinsville, N. Y., Dec. 4, 1893.

A MINIATURE WATER LILY.

DURING an extended tour the past summer in northern Minnesota I came upon a beautiful little white water lily. It is an almost exact miniature of *Nymphea odorata*. The flowers are about an inch and a half across. The leaves are oval-sagittate, three-fourths inches long. I found it only on the south branch of the Tamarack river, which flows into the northeast corner of Red Lake. It is there quite abundant. Can any of your readers give more information concerning it?

J. E. TODD.

University of South Dakota, Dec. 1.

FEIGNED DEATH IN SNAKES.

IN *Science* for Nov. 3 is an article on "Feigned Death in Snakes." Probably the writer is correct in his statement that the Heterodon does not (usually) bite himself just before feigning death. I recall one instance, however, in which a large black blowing viper, in the act of feigning death, contrived somehow to get his teeth (such as they were) caught in the skin on his side, and he was lying thus when I picked him up and loosed the teeth. This may have been accidental. I have often tried to get these snakes to bite something—anything—my hand, for instance, and never succeeded. But I have occasionally had one of them strike me a sharp rap with the end of his nose—of course without doing any damage. Moreover, I have not observed that they *usually* eject the contents of the stomach. When one of them has recently swallowed something, especially if it is something bulky, he will often (perhaps always) eject it before trying to escape or feigning death. But otherwise, my observation has not led me to believe that it is a common practice.

However, the thing that I especially desired to hear about was the action of rattlesnakes under similar circumstances. I have never seen a rattlesnake feign death, but reliable parties have reported the fact; only they generally speak of it as the snake killing himself. For they all state that the rattlesnake does bite himself and then seems to die. (The quickness with which they appear to die is suspicious). Now Dr. Mitchell states, after much study and experiment with the poison of snakes, that the poison of a rattlesnake injected under the skin of the same animal does not cause death. It is about these animals and their apparently pretended suicide that I would much like to hear.

J. W. KILPATRICK.

Fayette, Mo., Dec. 1.

DR. TOPINARD AND THE SERPENT MOUND.

IN the November 10th issue of *Science* Dr. Brinton has very properly replied to Dr. Paul Topinard, the eminent French anthropologist. American students, who have been so frequently told how much more the French know concerning prehistoric archæology than the scientists of this country, will find a great deal of satisfaction in noting the ignorance which the great savant Dr. Topinard displays in his article. I wish to call the attention of the readers of *Science* to the fact that, while Squier and Davis published an excellent map of the Serpent Mound (in Adams County, Ohio), Caleb Atwater wrote concerning it in 1820. So the eminent Frenchman has made a mistake of about sixty years in attributing the discovery to Professor Putnam. One can easily understand and overlook a mistake in locating or describing the small earthworks or western ruins on the part of the distinguished foreigner, but, after all that has been published about our greatest monument, the Serpent Mound, it is very strange that one whose entire life has been given to the study of prehistoric peoples should have fallen into such an error regarding it.

WARREN K. MOOREHEAD.

THE HARDNESS OF CARBORUNDUM.

REFERRING to my article on "Carborundum" (*Science*, XXII., 141), it is there stated that the discoverer of this substance claimed that it would cut and polish the diamond. In the December number of the *Am. Jour. Sci.*, XLVI., 473, Mr. G. F. Kunz states the result of an experiment made by him to determine this. A new wheel was provided, and, after several trials, it was found that the carborundum, though hard enough to cut sapphire and corundum, would not cut or polish the diamond. The carborundum crystals may be scratched by diamond points. The hardness is thus between 9 and 10, and it is, next to the diamond, the hardest substance known.

WM. P. BLAKE.

LATE-BLOOMING TREES.

WHILE at Brielle, N. J., I noticed, during the first week in September, several apple trees blooming quite freshly, and I have reports from Alpine, N. J., of pear trees and horse chestnuts being in bloom. Can any of your readers give an explanation of the cause and the effects (upon the trees) of this occurrence?

WALTER MENDELSON.

New York City.

TELLURIDE OF GOLD, CRIPPLE CREEK, COLORADO.

THE native gold of Cripple Creek, whether obtained from the placers or from the veins, is remarkably fine, being worth twenty dollars, or more, per ounce. It contains very little silver, and appears to be derived from a telluride allied to, if not identical with, the species calaverite, which contains about 41 per cent. of gold. The telluride is silver white, and is in prismatic crystals, much striated. In the oxidized ores the tellurium has leached out and left the gold behind in a spongy condition, but retaining the form of the original crystal A purple-